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272.

MARY WILDEN,

A VICTIM TO THE NEW POOR LAW,

OR THE

MALTHUSIAN AND MARCUSIAN SYSTEM EXPOSED;

IN

A LETTER TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

BIBLIOTHECA

BY SAMUEL ROBERTS.

"The wicked are turned into Hell."

LONDON:
WHITTAKER AND CO. AVE-MARIA-LANE; AND SOLD BY ALL BOOKSELLERS.

1839.

272.

Will you not then listen to the experience of antiquity? If not, we have a more recent instance to adduce of a nation violating the Laws of God, and unitedly declaring,—as you are doing by your public enactments and individual conduct—"*There is no God.*" Hear from one of our wisest and greatest senators, what France was previous to the Revolution of 1790;—what her sovereigns, her princes, her senators, and her nobles were at the end of a very few years from that time—you all well know:—

"The legitimate object of government is the general good.—That government is the best, which produces, FROM PERMANENT CAUSES, the greatest good, and least evil, to those within the sphere of its operation.

"During 175 years (from 1614 to 1789,) France had been without even the appearance of a voice in the direction of her own most momentous concerns. Every thing was under the control of a government, that had no other means for the support of its authority but corruption and cruelty. The people were studiously depressed by ignorance, by poverty, and extortion. The men of wealth and distinction were purchased either by the baubles of courtly ostentation, or by a lavish waste of the public revenue.—They were rewarded with the most iniquitous and incredible of all institutions, an exemption in some sort from the duty of contributing to that revenue, which was endeavoured to be exclusively wrung from the grasp of the poor, the weak, and the laborious.—They were prevailed upon to countenance, by being admitted into a partnership of the use of arbitrary imprisonment, punishment without an accusation and without a hearing, and the confinement of the Bastile. In vain would the reader expect from us, in this place, the instructive display of all the multiplied engines of Gallic despotism; the army of spies, perpetually employed by government, and intruding themselves into all the haunts of men; the mode of deciding juridical questions, without pretending to submit them to the sentiments of an impartial jury, without confronting witnesses with each other of the accused.

"The comfort and welfare of twenty millions was of no account when compared with the freak or fancy of the despot, the interest or inclination of his favourites, and the instruments of his despotism. The suggestion of a priest or a prostitute would desolate a province, and drive from the country its most industrious inhabitants."

DEDICATION.

TO THE

RIGHT HON. LORD JOHN RUSSELL.

"Let me fall into the hands of God, and not into the hands of man."

My Lord,—Just as I was about to send the following *Little Tract* to the press, I perceived by the London Newspapers of the 28th March, that your Lordship had declared in the House of Commons your intention to compel, if possible, the re-enacting of that God-defying—poor destroying—liberty abolishing—country ruining—New Poor Law, which would otherwise in a few months have happily died a natural death. I have, therefore, resolved thus to dedicate it to your Lordship.

I will now, then, tell your Lordship one truth, viz., that, if your Lordship, and other patricidal coadjutors in the Ministry, were to set fire to London and burn down every building within four miles of St. Paul's—taking the chance of saving lives and property—you would not do a tenth part of the injury to this mighty Empire that you will do by the *perpetuating* of this accursed murderous Bill. I am, my Lord, a little too old, and have had a little too much experience—especially of

late—to suffer me to expect to do any great good by attempting to cut blocks (even though bedizened with stars and garters, for they would then only be blocks still) with razors, I nevertheless do not *despair*, for there are instruments and powers to shiver the hardest of them into fire wood. What was it, my Lord, that in France at once drove thousands and thousands of men, as great, as rich, as arrogant, as self-sufficient, as God-defying, as country enslaving, as poor oppressing and destroying, as luxuriant and proud as yourself and co-adjutors, from all that they possessed, to be wandering vagrants over the face of the earth—while it shed the blood of almost as many of them upon the scaffold? I will tell your Lordship what it was! It was those very means which you will, by perpetuating this Hell-concocted Bill, be adopting. It was by insulting God—by setting His laws at defiance—by spreading infidelity and moral corruption through the land, oppressing and enslaving the lower ranks, and destroying the poor. Even the revoking of the Edict of Nantz, and the consequent massacre of St. Bartholomew, were not equal, by any means, in wickedness and cruel atrocity, to the revoking our long established *good Old Poor Law*. The brightest, and the most estimable, jewel in the diadem of this mighty Empire—a jewel which no other country ever possessed. The perpetrators of the former atrocity might think that they were doing God service—this, my Lord, I apprehend, can not have been the case with the perpetrators of the *massacre of St. Stephens*. I suspect but that few of them *really* believe that there is a *God*. The victims in the former instance—though numerous—suffered but little, the butchering was soon over. It was no

more destructive than that of one of the *splendid victories* of their, of our, Great Warrior. There was something of sudden, enthusiastic excitement there to plead in extenuation. But that is not the case in this massacre of British subjects by order of the Legislature of this reputed humane, liberty giving, and protecting Empire. The latter was a sordid, calculating, *savage* enactment. The object was worse than the American calculation of the *profit of slavery*. It was that, with the addition of the motives of the demons of Hell—inflicting together, the sufferings in this world, and eternal torments, on as many of the inhabitants of this earth as they possessed the power of laying their fangs upon.

Who are the victims of this infernal New Poor Law of yours, my Lord? They are the worn out, honest, industrious labourers, who have contributed, through life, to the support of great, lazy lubbers. They are poor afflicted creatures, male and female, whom it hath pleased God (we know not why) to afflict with mental and bodily diseases. They are poor infants, and children, deprived of, or torn from, their fathers, their mothers, and all their natural relatives. They are, in short, my Lord—(I beg your Lordship's pardon, you, perhaps, believe in no such person)—those whom the *Lord of Life*, when on earth, the most loved and the most cared for. These, my Lord, your accursed Bill (which you are now going to revivify) consigns to close imprisonment—exclusion from worshipping God—to famishing, and disease—to brutal violence—to horrible filth—and to premature death! Say not *Nay*, my Lord, read the following facts, and deny them if you can! Thousands, nay, tens of thousands, are thus suffering under your Bill of Hell. Nay, going beyond this,

you have dared—by the hands of reptile Tyrants—perhaps the bastards of Lords, to tie up the hands of free born Englishmen and women—from obeying God—in affording, at their own expense, to these poor, guiltless, meritorious, persecuted, perishing poor, the food and the consolation that God, humanity, and sympathy, are demanding for them. Who, then, are we to obey—(man I was going to say)—Lords, or the LORD of Lords?

What *are* Lords? Often, I suppose, the sons of Dukes! Well, if such had been born with a long tail, preferring to go on all fours like a beast, instead of walking *upright as a man*, they would have been Lords still. It was their inheritance—because it is the law of the land. And are not poor men in England born with *inheritances?* Certainly they are! They are born with a right to *life*—they are born to inherit *freedom*. Their ancestors fought, and bled, and died, to procure it, and to transmit it to them. They are born exempt from punishment, except for crime;—they are born (at least they *were* born) to a right to that parochial relief which the acts of Elizabeth assigned them, on the condition of their relinquishing depredation and vagrancy, and contributing, with all others, to the Poor-rates then enacted. On the ground of answering these claims, and subject to the payment of these Rates, did you, my Lord, and all other landowners, *hold your estates:* but you have now forfeited them. You have freed the poor from their allegiance. Instead of being their protectors, you have become their worst tyrants, oppressors, and destroyers. They must, then—and they do—consider you as their most inveterate enemies. Pray, my Lord, did your Lordship ever read about a *Lord WILLIAM RUSSELL*, who, in the reign of Charles II., died upon the

scaffold? If so, please to say what were the crimes for which *he* died! Was it for enslaving the people? Was it for setting the laws of his God at defiance? Was it for spreading (by means of the public money and patronage committed to his disposal) corruption through all the middle ranks? Was it for robbing the poor, the friendless, the afflicted, of their just rights, and committing them to prison and to death, unaccused of any crime?

I am, my Lord, old enough to have been contemporary with the Wilberforces, the Pitts, the Portlands, and the Burkes: men who regarded either the favour of God, or the welfare of their country, or both, as being before their own sordid interest, or their places and popularity. I recollect the first of these great men saying that, he did not think the Whigs of those days would wish absolutely to ruin their country, but he felt assured that they would venture to go so near to ruin it as would serve to bring *themselves* into office. Now, my Lord, I do really think that your Lordship, and squad, would all go the *whole hog*, rather than relinquish *your* places. For the retention of them, I firmly believe, that you have already proceeded to lengths subversive of the laws of God—of the welfare of your country—of the liberty of the people, and to the promoting of the universal spread of moral corruption and irreligion throughout the nation; encouraging villainy, and the infliction of unjust and horrible misery and destruction on the poor. Pray what, my Lord, do you think that Mr. Pitt, or the *late* Duke of Portland, would have said of this mean, paltry, pitiful plundering of the poor? For this base purpose, you found that you must — at whatever cost — secure the West Indian, the East Indian, and the Landed and the Factory interests. To secure the first, you

bamboozled the people out of *twenty millions sterling*, for the professed granting of the *immediate and total abolition of Slavery*: and then gave that enormous sum to men who ought to have been sent to the treadmill—for what you, and they, called *Apprenticeship*—a thing which nobody could either practice or understand. To secure the second, you suffered the Leadenhall squad to have their own way; and you individually sacrificed your own word and honour: with the right, the livelihood, perhaps, the *existence* of an injured, honourable man, whose cause you had promised to support and advocate. Yet this man —this friend—so superior, with all his faults, to *you* and to *them*—you sacrificed,—leaving him to the vengeance of his tyrannical persecutors: for the basely selfish purpose of securing *their* interest, and of retaining a situation of which you are, I conceive, as unworthy as you are unfit for. To secure the third, you have concocted, tried, and mean to *maintain*, this Bill of Hell; which the great Lord Eldon declared, with almost his dying breath, was "*the most iniquitous bill that was ever enacted in any Christian country.*" To secure the fourth, you suffer the mill-owners to murder little children in the way that suits their interest the best. I have very great doubts of there being (with the exception of Joseph Hume, Esq. and our two Representatives,) one-third of the present Members of Parliament who might not be tempted, by places and pensions, to sell their Country, as a dependent on some Foreign State. Indeed, as the poet says, *that House* seems now—

"Like a well-furnished table,
With hundreds of hungry men met,
To get the best places they're able,
And scramble for what they can get.

I believe, my Lord, that I know the lower and working classes in this country much better than your Lordship does. They are no way disposed to imitate the example of infidel France. Your Lordship and the Aristocracy seem, however determined, by this infernal bill, to drive them to do so. They all feel and detest that bill of legal robbery: consequently, hatred of the Aristocracy, with a desire of revenge, is increasing, and rankling in their hearts. The exploding train is laid throughout the kingdom: a spark will serve to ignite it. Before then, you, my Lord, may perhaps be a Duke, and you may think, with your Lordship's prototype the Duke of Orleans, that *you* will ride the whirlwind and direct the storm. If you do attempt it, I doubt not but that your Lordship's latter end will be like his. An explosion in any one great manufacturing town, in either Lancashire or the West Riding, would be followed in six days by the same in half the large towns in the kingdom. The communication by railroads would be cut off in six hours. The Great Captain would probably find his own troops *opposed* to him: and in less than a fortnight, it is probable, your Lordship—if happy enough to escape—would be on your voyage to America. *A word* to the wise is enough; but a fool may be brayed in a mortar in vain.—"Oh Lord God, the Poor committeth himself unto THEE, for *Thou* art the Helper of the Friendless."—Psalm 10, 14.

SAMUEL ROBERTS.

Park Grange, April 10, 1839.

P.S. Beware, my Lord, of the villainous tyranical *concentration system*.—You will thereby *concentrate* the whole mass of the people against their Rulers.

LETTER, &c.

"That your *Lordships* have *rights*, nobody will presume to deny—that the *Commons* have rights, nobody will deny; that *every subject* has rights nobody will deny. Now to say that when a Prince shall invade all these rights at once, the whole collective body of the nation has no way to vindicate those rights is so inconsistent, so contrary to reason, that it is to be wondered it could ever enter the mind of man." —*General Stanhope's Speech on Dr. Sachevell's Trial.*

"Go to, now, ye RICH MEN, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you. Behold the hire of the Labourers that have reaped down your fields which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth; and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. Ye have lived in pleasure on the earth and been wanton,—ye have nourished your hearts as in a day of slaughter. Ye have condemned and killed the just—and he doth not resist you."—ST. JAMES, chap. v.

TO

HIS GRACE THE DUKE OF PORTLAND.

MY LORD DUKE,—Though your Grace has informed me that you do not conceive that you are bound to reply to my letters,* I do think that when your Grace voluntarily continues to take so prominent a part in a public measure of the utmost importance in which every human being, particularly every Englishman, and more particularly every *Christian*, is most intimately and alarmingly concerned, I have a right, as

* I have lately learned, that the letter which I sent to his Grace of Portland, to be laid before the Guardians of the Worksop Union, (of which his Grace is chairman) requesting a farther allowance for poor John Berry, aged 91, was, instead of being laid *before* the Guardians —laid by his Grace, *behind* the fire.

standing in all these relations, to continue to address your Grace publicly, whenever occasion may seem to require. That it does so now, I have no hesitation in saying that your Grace must well know.

Before I proceed to the more immmediate object of this letter, it may be proper—whether it may give your Grace pleasure or not—to state that the poor, honest, industrious JOHN BERRY, aged ninety-one years, whom, with his aged wife, is by your Grace, and Grace's tail, condemned to live or die, on *two shillings* a week, is yet alive and as well, and in rather better *keep* and spirits, than when I last mentioned him to your Grace. I have, farther to inform your Grace respecting him, that by may advice and assistance, the old man stated his case in a petition to the HOUSE of LORDS where, whatever good it may do him—it will do *him* no discredit. Your Grace is aware that the same cannot be said as regards some others. Your Grace may look in the *Times* newspaper of the 19th March, for the reception that the old man's petition met with in the house. Your Grace has, I believe, heard more since upon this subject than I conceive your Grace will approve of.

I will now proceed to the more immediate object of this address, the case of what I may, and must, believe, in spite of the Jury's verdict, to be that of the poor, *murdered* Mary Wilden, late a prisoner in your Grace's crack Worksop Bastile, on whose body an inquest was held on the 4th and 7th March, at Dinnington, before Mr. *Badger*, the Coroner. That there was any investigation of the case at all, the public have not to thank either your Grace, or coadjutor Guardians of Worksop Union, who were, as might be expected, greatly opposed to it, wishing this as other deaths to be hushed. The first that I heard of the dreadful circumstance was, I think, on the 23d Feb. from the brother of the poor victim, who now works at Sheffield. The account which he then gave me of the whole transaction, was dreadful. He said that his sister, who lives with a brother of his at Dinnington, had not heard of her sister (who was about forty years old, and had been frequently subject to fits, from ten years of age, and who was then in Worksop Union Workhouse,) for several weeks, till the 17th Ult. when she was told that she was *dying*. That she went over to Worksop, on the next day, to see her.

Resolved to have her sister away from the Workhouse, (if such it is to be called) even though she should die on the

road. She took a cart on the 20th, with a bed in it—and, took her, with her, to Dinnington. Her brother told me that he expected to hear of her death every day, as there was no chance of her living long. I desired that if she died, he would insist upon an *inquest*. If it had not been for this, the public would have heard nothing about the matter. I heard no more of him till March 1st, when he called to leave me the following statement in writing:—

SIR,—I was over at Dinnington on Tuesday, 26th February, and Mr. Athorpe* and Mr. Downes† was there on Sunday, but there were no questions asked her. Mr. Downes was there on Monday, and he asked her many questions. She told him that she would tell him all about them ill using her. She told him that the doctor had only seen her *twice*,‡ and *he had never seen all her wounds*. She also told him that the *Irish* § woman dragged her up and down in bed by the hair of the head, put her hand * * * , and said she would pull her guts out, d——n b——h. She also told him that one day there was a man going past the window, and the Irish woman asked him if that was not a nice place; and said here is a d——d b——h and a w——e laying. This was when the poor patient was laying helpless in bed. She said that the Irish woman had flogged her with a *rod* and *besom-stick*, nipped her, scratched her, punched her, and that she had been used as bad as any slave.‖

* Mr. Athorpe is, I believe, Lord of the Manor, a Magistrate of the West Riding of Yorkshire, and residing at Dinnington.

† The Rev. Mr. Downes is the Minister. I have not the pleasure of knowing him; but more than half a century ago, I well knew his father, now living, but very aged. The putrifying, sloughed, and mortifying sores of this poor dying female victim of spiritual wickedness and sordid selfishness in high places, were not more corrupted (though the stench was intolerable) than at this time is (by this infernal New Poor Law) *Church* and *State*, throughout almost all the ramifications of both of them.

‡ It appears clear on balancing all the conflicting evidence, and referring to circumstances, that she must have been confined principally to her bed for more than fifteen weeks in that deplorable state. How often had the *Chaplain* visited her? I fear that *he* had never been examined, or heard of her *spiritual* wounds! What is his salary?

§ I apprehend that the Governor found that there was not an *English* woman in the House who would do the work which he expected this Female Irish Savage to do.

‖ Bad as a Slave! Gracious Heavens! The horrible annals of Slavery throughout the world, I apprehend, hardly instances cruel, savage oppression (taking all circumstances into consideration) to equal this in atrocity! These circumstances I shall explain before I conclude. Now the above horrible statement, the Brother says, is what his afflicted dying Sister made in the presence of others—to the Rev. Mr. Downes, Minister of the Established Church at both Laughton and

I will now proceed to state the evidence as given before the Coroner, with such remarks as the several evidences seem in succession to require.

From the Sheffield Iris of March 12.

ALLEGED MALTREATMENT OF A PAUPER, IN THE WORKSOP UNION WORKHOUSE.

YESTERDAY week, an inquest was held before Thos. Badger, Esq., Coroner, at Dinnington, on the body of Mary Wilden, who had died on the Friday previous, at her brother's house in that village, whither she had been removed about ten days previously from the Union Workhouse, at Worksop. After the Jury had been sworn, they proceeded to view the body, which was much emaciated, and disfigured by several very deep ulcers, and a number of bruises on the arms, chest, legs, and back. There was a very large ulcer on the top of the left foot, another over each hip-joint, that on the right side extending considerably beneath the surface, and a broad black slough at the lower part of the backbone. Both legs were much swelled, and discoloured, the deceased having apparently been affected with dropsy some time previous to her death.

On returning to the Jury-room, the first witness called, was Anna Priestley, of Dinnington, who, being sworn, deposed that it was nearly three years since the deceased first went to the Union Workhouse at Worksop, and was sent there by the Township of Aston. Never saw her in the Workhouse, but saw her when she came home on Wednesday, the 20th of February last, whence she had been brought by her sister Ann. On deceased's arrival at Dinnington, witness helped to strip her. She had many sore wounds on her hips, and the top of one of her feet was very bad indeed. Does not know which part of the rest of her person was the worst, for she was black and blue all

Dinnington, (I believe of St. John's likewise.) The Reverend Gentleman will, therefore, be able to render it correct if it be not so. Her Sister states, that the poor dying victim was to the last—between the fits—collected and rational, though, after having had fits during thirty years, and endured the horrible sufferings of the last four months, her brain must have been at times affected. Though the Rev. Gentleman was with the poor dying creature several times, and thus heard her dreadful relation of her bodily sufferings, I did not hear that he addressed one word on religious subjects to her.

over her carcase. The skin was off her knees in pieces as big as a crown piece. She appeared to have been beaten with a stick all over. But she (Mary Wilden) said she had been *paid* with a strap and not a stick, by an Irish woman in the Workhouse. Her brother and sister were present when she made this statement. She had a black eye. She could scarcely speak, having been so afflicted with fits. It was dark when her clothes were pulled off, and whether they were filthy or not does not know. She was very ragged. Her clothes could scarcely be called clothes. She was very dirty also. Has known the deceased above twenty years, and never knew her to struggle when in fits. Thinks the deceased was in her 40th year. She had only one single handerchief belonging to the Union. Supposes the rest were her own clothes. Was told by the deceased that the Irish woman at the Workhouse swore "she would pull her guts out," and had otherwise used her very ill. At times deceased knew what she was saying, and at other times witness believes she did not on account of her fits. After she had fits, does not think she knew what she said. She had marks on her arms as if she had been beat with a stick. Thinks the deceased was in her senses, when she made the above statement.

Ann Wilden, of Dinnington, spinster, aged 44.—The deceased, Mary Wilden, was her sister. It is nearly three years since deceased was sent to the Workhouse; had seen her at the Workhouse several times; deceased came over occasionally to Dinnington to see her; heard on Sunday, 17th February, that the deceased was very ill, and went on the following morning to see her, and arrived at the Workhouse about nine o'clock, A.M.; asked to see Mr. Moodie, the Governor, who came, and she asked to see her sister; he told witness that he did not know whether her sister was alive or dead, but he thought dead; the Governess went with her to see deceased; a woman, "Irish Molly," whom witness supposes waited on deceased, wished to go first, when Mrs. Moodie desired her to let her sister go first, and see whether she knew her; before she got into the room, her sister heard her voice, and said, "Eh, bless thee, art thou come to see me once more?" Asked her if she would have a little bloomstick, when she said "Yes;" when she looked at her to give her the bloomstick, found one hand dirtied above her wrist with her own *fæces;* and the other was not fit to take it in; her face was

also covered with it. Said to Mr. and Mrs. Moodie, that she would like to take her home, if the doctor thought she could be removed; Mr. Moodie said he would ask the doctor, and let her know; her cap was very dirty, and was not fit to be kept on her head; Mr. Moodie saw the dirty state in which she was laid in bed; received a message from Mr. Moodie on Tuesday, that she was to fetch her, and take bed and bedding with her, so as to prevent her getting cold; went to the Workhouse on the following Wednesday, and saw Mr. Moodie, who said she was taking all upon herself in taking her away, and that she must remember that she would not have a farthing allowed with her; told him it was soon enough to name that when she had asked for any thing; brought her home to Dinnington about five o'clock on the same day; fetched in Ann Priestley to look at her wounds; before removing her, asked for any medicines that she had in order to take them with her, when "Irish Molly" said she had not had any for a fortnight; asked when the doctor saw her, and was told on the Sunday previous, but he had not done anything at her wounds; thought it was proper that the surgeon had done something to her, for her chemise was sticking into her wounds on both sides her thighs, and on her shoulders; asked the woman how deceased had got a black eye, when she was told she had done it with having a fit; when she stripped her at home, found her chemise sticking into her wounds; on the next day sent for Mr. Wilkinson, surgeon, Harthill, one of the surgeons of the Union; he saw deceased, and ordered the chemise to be bathed off with warm water, so that he might see the wounds; when he saw them the smell was almost intolerable; took her chemise off on the Sunday following, and found her covered with thousands of lice in the hair of her head, on her person, and her clothes; there were three sorts of lice, head-lice, carcase-lice, and crab-lice; Harriet Johnston was present when she found the lice, and applied something to kill them; was told by her sister that a rod had been made for the children at the Workhouse out of an old birch besom, and when *they* (meaning Mr. and Mrs. Moodie) were at chapel, the Irish woman took the rod, and beat her with the thick end of it over the hips, thighs, and shoulders; that the Irish woman *nudded* and nipped her all over her person, and struck her on the eye on the Sunday morning because she could not eat her porridge fast enough; the

same woman swore she would pull her guts out; she has been cruelly used; the Irish woman used to put her hands on her chemise over the sore places of her body, and rub them up and down to hurt her, and then her sister would swear.

Cross-examined by the Coroner—Thinks her sister was quite sensible when she made the above statements. Was subject to fits since she was sixteen years old. Mrs. Moodie told witness that her sister had laid in bed five weeks, and the Irish woman said fifteen or sixteen weeks.

Cross-examined by Mr. Whall, Clerk of the Worksop Union—She might have parted with the *fæces* with which her person was smeared during the night; the sheets she had on the bed were very dirty. When she fetched her on the Wednesday, she had a clean sheet and a clean chemise. When she was under those fits, she parted with her urine, but never knew her part with her *fæces*, previous to her being at home this last time.

Harriet Johnston, wife of Jonathan Johnston, labourer, Dinnington, being sworn—Has attended the deceased ever since Thursday, the 21st of February, the day after she was brought from the workhouse. Ann Wilden and witness were about to strip her, and n endeavouring to remove the chemise, it was found sticking in the wounds on both sides of her hips. The smell was nauseous for any person to be in the room. Was present when she was undressed. She appeared to be bruised and striped from head to foot. Seemed as if she had been scotched with a rod on some parts of the body, and with a stick on others. She was in a dreadful state for any body to see or witness. She was covered with lice in her head, on her body, and private parts. A great many were combed out of her head, quite black. The deceased had been fifteen weeks in bed. They were also picked off her nightgown. She asked deceased how she had got the bruises and stripes, and she said it was the Irish woman who had waited on her, when she dirtied herself, and when she was taking her breakfast, and did not eat it fast enough. She used to pull her up by the hair of the head, call her old "Gilliver," and tell her to make haste for she was tired waiting of her. Has seen the deceased in three or four fits in a day since she came home, but she never struggled in them.

Unity Williams, alias "Irish Molly," was cautioned not to say anything to criminate herself—Is a pauper in

the Worksop Union Workhouse, and acts as nurse when required. Is a widow; by birth an Irishwoman. Has never intended to use cruelty to Mary Wilden, nor ever saw any person use any cruelty to her. Always did as Mr. Hase, the surgeon, ordered her. He always came and examined deceased, and when he asked witness if she had done as he ordered her, she said "Yes," and he replied "Very well, it's all right." Has never beat the deceased with a rod in her life, and never saw any person beat her with one. Never beat her with a strap, a stick, or anything else. Never dragged her by the hair of her head. Never threatened to pull her guts out. Never threatened her, nor heard any person threaten her. Never called her an "old Gilliver," and never said she was tired of waiting on her. Never saw her ill-used. She was treated kindly by the mistress of the house. Witness gave deceased her victuals. Never complained of her not eating her victuals fast enough. Never saw any one use any cruelty to her. She had everything Mrs. Moodie could afford to give her. She had gin, wine, beef-tea, mutton-broth, pudding, or anything else she fancied. She had a black place on the nose or eye received by falling out of the bed in a fit on the Saturday before she was removed from the Workhouse. Heard her fall out of bed, and, assisted by another woman, Sarah Whitehead, when she was out of the fit, put her to bed again. Has seen her repeatedly fall down in fits. Thinks that the injury to the eye was done by the iron bedstead. She had a bad leg when she came into the Workhouse. It was raw from the ankle to the knee. Was ordered by Mr. Hase to wash it, rub it with ointment, and be sure and keep it clean. She frequently tumbled out of bed in fits. She also fell upon the floor, the stairs, and in the yard. In these falls she produced bruises on different parts of her body, and knocked the skin off. The wounds on her hips were done by lying in bed for 16 weeks. The skin was knocked off her knees by falling,

Joseph Moodie, Governor of the Worksop Union Workhouse, on his oath—The deceased came into the Workhouse on the 31st of August, 1836; she was brought to the Workhouse by Mr. Airey, one of the Overseers of Anston township, to which she belonged; remarked that her right leg was bandaged with linen bandages; there was a running from it which was very offensive to the inmates; she has continued in his charge ever since; the medical officer of the house has

regularly attended her; has frequently seen her fall down in the yard and out of chairs in fits; the reason for her removal into the Infirmary was his seeing her fall down in a fit, about four months' ago, with her right arm on some grating in the yard, when she cut it, and it bled profusely; she has been regularly attended by Mr. Hase in the Infirmary, and had wine, gin, &c. at various times, by his directions, until three weeks ago, when her sister came to see her; does not know that she has received any wound except by falling down; is sure she has not been ill-treated; has never had a strop, a rod, or a stick, in the house yet; though there is a school for the children, believes there is no rod even there; deceased never complained to witness that Unity Williams had ill-treated her, nor to his wife to his knowledge; did not know of her wounds till a few days before she was taken away; his wife told him she had some sores on her thighs with laying in bed; is satisfied she has not been in bed more than eight or ten days; does not think the deceased was lousy when she left the Workhouse; when any person comes into the Workhouse they are not admitted in their own clothing into the wards; they are clothed generally in new dresses provided by the Union; before being clothed, they are stripped, washed, and, if necessary, their hair cut; their own clothes are packed up and ticketed with the parish to which they belong, and returned to them when they leave the house; the clothes are washed, if necessary, before put away.

In consequence of the excitement prevalent amongst the people in the neighbourhood, the Coroner deemed a *post mortem* examination necessary, in which the Jury acquiesced. He accordingly ordered it for next day, and adjourned the inquest till the following Thursday.

At the adjourned inquest, which was held at Anston, the Jury brought in a verdict that the deceased, the said Mary Wilden, died from disease arising from natural causes, and not from any hurt, injury, or violence to her done or committed to the knowledge of the jurors.

[We were not able to attend the adjourned inquest on Thursday, so that we do not know what particular diseases arising from natural causes the medical men found. Whatever these may have been, there is no

doubt, that she left the Workhouse in a disgustingly nasty condition. We are quite willing to make every allowance for the outraged feelings of relatives, inducing them to give their evidence with a little extra colouring, but the facts of her dirty condition were distinctly sworn to by two females, besides her own sister; and Mr. Moodie, the governor, could not positively deny it, but thought she was not "in a lousy condition" when she left the house. We also ask our readers to mark the discrepancies in the statements as to the length of time the deceased was confined to bed —one saying eight or ten days, another five weeks, and another fifteen or sixteen!! Mr. Moodie seems an excellent sample of a new Union Workhouse Governor. He told Ann, "that he did not know whether her sister was alive or dead, but he thought dead." Another specimen of his thought, but not his thoughtfulness. What cared he for the poor epiliptic pauper? "The thought was parent to the wish;" and whether she was dead or not, was a matter of indifference. The secrets of the prison-house have been partially disclosed by the investigation this case has received; but we have no doubt it has only been partial, and that much remains behind. Let it ever be kept in mind, too, that the Tory Duke of Portland, when at Welbeck, presides as regularly at the Board of Guardians, at Worksop, as he does at his own table, and watches over the expenditure of the Union with constant attention, while the miserable inmates in the Union Workhouse are left to the tender mercies of an Irish Pauper.]—EDS. IRIS.

(From the Sheffield Iris of March 26.)

TO THE EDITORS OF THE SHEFFIELD IRIS.

SIRS,—The attention of the Board of Guardians of this town having been called to your partial report of the evidence taken at the inquest on the body of Mary Wilden, I am instructed to transmit to you a copy of

the additional evidence adduced at the adjourned inquest.

Presuming that the dissemination of truth alone can be your object, as Editors of the *Iris*, I trust with confidence in your inserting the evidence now furnished in your paper of Tuesday next.

In consequence of the absence of Mr. Badger, who is at York Assizes,* I have been unable to procure a copy of the notes given to him by Mr. May.—I am, Sirs, your obedient Servant,

JOHN WHALL.

Worksop, 16th March, 1839.

Anston, 7th March, 1839.

ADJOURNED INQUEST ON THE BODY OF MARY WILDEN, BEFORE MR. BADGER, CORONER.

Sarah Whitehead, an inmate of the Union Workhouse at Worksop, being sworn, deposed that she was summoned by the Coroner; that she has been in the Workhouse at Worksop about eighteen months; knew Mary Wilden; assisted in the kitchen, and occasionally assisted Unity Williams who was the nurse of Mary Wilden, and who is one of the nurses in the Workhouse; when Mary Wilden had occasion to be got up I assisted Unity Williams in raising her, as she could not get up alone; for the last three weeks that Mary Wilden was in the Workhouse, I assisted nurse in washing her, and getting her up and keeping her clean; when she wanted to be turned from her right side to her left side, I was called to assist; she got very sore with lying on her right side; she has lain in bed for the best part of the last three weeks; she appeared very ill, and very much swollen both in head, legs, and thighs; I never saw Unity Williams strike her with a strap, a rod, a stick, or any thing else; we are not allowed to strike one another there; there has not been either rod, stick, or strap there; I slept on the next bed to Mary Wilden in the same ward, and must have known if there were such things there; Mary Wilden has several times fallen out of bed, when in fits, on the floor; she hurt her nose by falling on the floor a short time before she left the house; I have seen her in fits frequently; she would fall down when in those fits; I remember her hurting her elbow, and that it bled very much; this was some months ago; I never heard Mary Wilden complain of Unity Williams' conduct;

* On his trial for blackguardism.

Mary Wilden used to cry out, when we assisted her up, that her back and legs hurt her; I never heard any of the paupers make a complaint of either the Master or Mistress; I have plenty to eat; the house and beds are very clean, and I have no complaint to make; I never heard any pauper complain; I never heard Mary Wilden state any thing about Unity Williams having threatened to pull her guts out, or that she had put her hand to improper parts of her person; Mary Wilden at times was not her own woman; before she had fits, at times she did not know what she said nor what she did; she has had as many as two or three pair of sheets on her bed in one week; she used to foul the bed frequently; I could not get her upon the pot; I think she was naturally dirty, and might have got up many times and not have dirtied the bed; when she was in her fits, she used to pass her fœces sometimes; the paupers' heads (men, women, and children) are combed every Saturday; Unity Williams used to comb Mary Wilden; I have seen her comb her head, and also cut her hair; the children are combed twice aweek; I have never seen lice upon Mary Wilden whilst in the Workhouse; Mr. Hase is the surgeon who visits the Workhouse, and he does so almost every day; I have seen him often visit Mary Wilden; he saw her the morning that she was taken away; I have several times known him order plaisters for her legs, and ointment for Unity Williams to use to her; Unity Williams is not a bad tempered woman; I never heard her quarrel with any one; the worst I ever heard Unity Williams say was, "that she (Mary Wilden) was a dirty woman, and might ask her for the pot rather than dirty the bed;" Mary Wilden used to blackguard her, and call her an "Irish Old Bitch;" I don't think Mary Wilden knew at the time what she said; Mary laid in bed a good deal; she had been ill for some time; she has been in the Infirmary for fifteen or sixteen weeks; the wounds were sometimes plaistered; I at times helped Unity Williams to put plaisters on; she had a bad leg for some time; she has hurt her knees by falling; she has often fallen in the passages, in the bedroom, also out of her chair; she has fallen against the bedstead; for the last three weeks I used to fetch a woman out of the Nursery to help Unity Williams and myself.

Willliam Hodson, of Anston, labourer, being sworn, deposed that he had been about four months in the Union Workhouse at Worksop; that he left last Mon-

day; that he knew Mary Wilden was abused very much by the nurse, Unity Williams; I saw Unity Williams, on the Monday before she left the Workhouse, thump her with her fists; she slapped her bottom with her open hand; there was nobody else present at the time; I saw her through a window, the casement was open; Mary Wilden cried out "Murder! murder! murder!" Unity Williams said to Mary Wilden she should have only one meal a day; I was going to my work, and could stop no longer; this happened about a quarter before 9 o'clock in the morning; I told a man called Henry Good, a pauper in the Workhouse, that Unity Williams was abusing Mary Wilden very bad, and said "mark you how she is crying out murder;" I could not get to her, for we were outside the room; out of doors no person was with me but Henry Good; he was about ten yards off; I heard her cry out murder before I got to the window; I did not complain to any one but to Henry Good; I could not get to her to assist her; I have told many persons what I saw since I came out; I have told my wife; some lodgers in a house where I lodge; they are gone now; I don't recollect their names, nor where they are gone to; I can't recollect telling any one else; I have told Joseph Spurr, of Anson, my son-in-law; Unity Williams struck Mary Wilden very severely; the strokes were violent; they were hard ones; there was no one in the room; I have been treated very mean at the Workhouse; I never could get a bellyfull; I never saw Mary Wilden ill-treated, except on the Monday morning; never at any other time; she never complained to me or to any person in my hearing; I never complained to the Master of the Workhouse; if I had, it would have been of no use: I could not get in, the doors were locked; the reason why Unity Williams had slapped Mary Wilden was for daubing the bed; I saw she was both wet and dirty up to her middle; Unity Williams wanted her to get out of bed, and she could not; I was standing at the back of the Workhouse; there is one window looking from the hospital to the side where I was standing; I stood close to the window, which looks from the hospital to the outside of the buildings towards the field; I was going to my work; I heard blows, and went to the window; Unity Williams had no stick in her hand; no rod; no strap; she thumped her with her fists, and then slapped her with her open hand over her bottom; the blows were lundy blows; Henry Good, when I

told him what I had seen, said " Unity Williams was a damned villain."

Mrs. Sarah Moody, Matron of the Union Workhouse, at Worksop, being sworn, deposed—that she has known Mary Wilden ever since she came into the Workhouse; she left on Monday, the 20th February; Mary Wilden never complained to me of ill-treatment by Unity Williams; I never saw Unity Williams ill-treat her, nor did any other person ill-treat her; Unity Williams is a good tempered woman—humane and kind; she treats those paupers well whom she has to nurse; I never heard any complaint against her, and those persons who have come out of the Infirmary have thanked her for her attention to them; we have neither a rod, stick, or strap in the place, not even in the school-room; the men and women are combed every Saturday, and the children twice a-week; Mary Wilden has been a very dirty woman; she has very frequently fouled the bed; we always give persons in sickness clean linen when there is occasion; we do not think much about the trouble; I am quite sure Mary Wilden was not lousy; I have seen her combed and washed, and her hair cut by Unity Williams; I have frequently seen her fall down in fits in the yard, and out of her chair; the surgeon, Mr. Hase, generally visited the house every day; I have frequently known him give medicines to Unity Williams for Mary Wilden; I have given her powders myself in wine; she has never wanted for anything; she always had what she wanted; she has had sufficient food of a good kind; she has had beef-tea, mutton, rabbit, and veal broths, and rice-pudding also; she was naturally a dirty woman; I am sure she has not known at all times what she said; the paupers have clean linen every Saturday, but in the Infirmary, they have it as frequently as necessary; we have sufficient soap and other necessary articles furnished by the Guardians for the use of the Workhouse; it appeared to me that the sore, which I think was on the left foot, was occasioned by her sitting too near the fire; it was blistered, and I saw it soon after the blister broke; she has been ill for sixteen weeks; she was confined to her bed for about a fortnight before she was taken away.

Mr. Henry Hase, Surgeon, of Worksop, being sworn, deposed—that he has been Surgeon to the Worksop Union ever since its formation in 1836: I have known Mary Wilden ever since she came into

the Workhouse; when I first knew her, she appeared to be suffering under an organic disease of the brain; it appeared to be of some standing; she appeared to me to be in a debilitated state; I ascertained she was subjected to fits; I attended her very soon after she came into the Workhouse, on occasion of her having fits, and for the ulcer on her right leg; in the beginning of November last, she had an intermittent fever for a month or five weeks, during which time I attended her daily; she lay in bed about a fortnight of that time; she had very slight wounds upon her hips, arising from pressure by lying in bed, and the consequences of a debilitated constitution; I saw she had a black eye, and her nurse told me it was from falling out of bed; this was said in the presence of Mary Wilden; I continued to attend the deceased up to the time of her being taken from the Workhouse; towards the middle of December, she was attacked with a dropsy, called *anasarcha*, she was then confined to her bed for about ten days, and her ulcers and her hips became much worse; she did not sit up the whole of the day; probably only from three to four hours; I ordered soap plaisters to be applied to the hips, and ointment to the feet; I also gave her medicine, and ordered what I thought necessary diet; I have occasionally seen the medicine administered to her; I know she has had wine when I ordered it; I have given it to her myself occasionally, and she has told me soon afterwards she had not had any; she has at other times told me that she had had wine, and that Mrs. Moody was very kind to her; I have considered Mary Wilden generally not rational; she has frequently told me she has not had wine just after I have myself given it to her; I think it was constitutional; I saw Mary Wilden on Wednesday morning, the day the left the Workhouse; I had seen her the previous day; the wounds on her hips were deep ulcers arising from pressure by lying in bed and from a debilitated constitution; they were certainly not the result of any external violence; the wounds would have been of a very different nature and character; such wounds I think could not be produced by a blow or other violence; Mary Wilden has had every care and attention from me; as the Surgeon of the Worksop Union Workhouse, I saw her wounds frequently, and it was impossible to get them to heal on account of her debilitated constitution, and constant pressure from lying in bed, and the involuntary discharge of the fœces

and the urine, which would contribute to increase the ulcerations and prevent their healing; I could not desire a better nurse than Unity Williams; she has been attentive and kind in her treatment to the paupers, and has always appeared to have a seeming desire to keep them clean and comfortable; I never saw her strike or beat her patients, nor did I ever hear her complained of or blamed by any patients; Mr. Moody asked me if Mary Wilden might be allowed to go out of the Workhouse, as her friends wished to take her; I said they might take her, but I would not be responsible for the consequences; I did not consider her removal attended with immediate danger; I am not prepared to say how far it might hasten her death: I have examined the body since her death; the post mortem examination was taken by Mr. May, of Rotherham, and Mr. Wilkinson, of Harthill, in my presence; we fonnd disease of the brain, disease of the lungs and chest—extensive disease of the heart—disease of the liver—and not any external injury to the person occasioned by violence; I attribute the cause of death—to the amount of suffering caused by organic disease of the brain, chest, and liver —the extensive sloughs or ulcers on the hips and a generally debilitated constitution; I am satisfied the deceased has not died from any violence; I examined particularly her person externally, and if any violent or serious blows had been given to her on the Monday previous to her removal from the Workhouse, I think I should have discovered them on the post mortem examination; there were no lice on the dead body; I looked for them carefully but could find none.

Mr. Wilkinson, surgeon, of Harthill, being sworn, deposed that he was called in to see Mary Wilden, on the 21st February last, at Dinnington; that he found her lying npon a quantity of straw upon the floor in her sister's house; I examined her person and found extensive ulcers on each hip; also on her right foot: also two dark spots on each knee; I put some questions to her about how long she had had the ulcers and how long she had been in bed; but she could not give me any satisfactory answers; she appeared to have quite lost her memory; she was not conscious of what was passing at the time, and appeared to have no recollection of what had passed; she continued in that state until her death; I never saw her in any other state; I think any statements she might make during that time, were the ravings of a disordered

mind; she was in an exhausted and weakly state; the wounds were sloughing ulcers produced from pressure by lying in bed; I do not think they were from blows; the ulcer on the foot was occasioned by sitting before the fire; I prescribed her wine and other stimulants; but she continued to get worse until she died; the wounds on her knees were contusions from falling; I did not observe any fist blows on her person, nor the black eye or injury on the side of her nose; if any violent or serious blows had been given with the fist on Monday, I think I should have observed them; I never said she had been murdered in the Workhouse; I never entertained such an idea; I should say, her death was from exhaustion from viseral disease, and also, from the sloughing ulcers, all arising from natural causes and not from violence.

Henry May, of Rotherham, a Member of the Royal College of Surgeons in London, and a Licentiate of the Apothecaries' Company, on his oath saith,—On Tuesday last, the 5th of March inst., by order of Mr. Badger, the coroner, I, along with Mr. Henry Hase, of Worksop, and Mr. William Wilkinson, of Harthill, surgeons, made a particular post mortem examination of the body of Mary Wilden, then lying dead at Dinnington. She appeared about fifty years of age, and very much emaciated. On examining the body externally, we found a slight mark of a bluish black colour, on the left side of the nose, appearing to be the result of a blow or fall, but not of recent occurrence; on the right hip was an ulcer of the size of a crown piece, of some depth; there was another ulcer on the left hip, but not so deep as the other; on the lower part of the back was a black slough; on the left knee there was a slough, the size of a shilling, and on the other knee, several discolourations; on the upper surface of the left foot was a large ulcer, of a triangular shape, and on the right were two small ulcers, at the base of the great toe, and another small one on the outer ankle; the foot and leg of this side were generally edœnatous; the back of the legs and under surface of the body generally were discoloured from the effects of their position after death. On opening the head the skull was found rather thicker than usual; the dura mater was healthy; on the upper surface of both hemispheres of the brain, and under the arachnoid tunic, was a deposition of adventitious membrane of several inches in extent; no abnormal quantity of fluid was found in the ventricles;

in the situation of the pineal gland was a fibrogelatinous deposit, about the size of a marble; in the chest the two pleuræ were firmly adherent on the right side to a great extent, and that part which was not so was occupied by turbid serum; the left cavity of the chest was filled with a similar fluid, but had no adhesions; the right lung was œdematous; the left lung small, compressed, and less crepitant than usual; the opposite surfaces of the pericardium were completely adherent; the heart itself rather small, and its muscular structure pale and soft; on the convex surface of the liver, was a deposition of false membrane, and the substance of it granular; the other viscera of the abdomen, as far as could be examined, appeared healthy, but in consequence of the improper interference of the friends of the deceased, the examination was not properly completed; the labia were natural and not lacerated; the wounds on the body of the deceased, in my judgment, arose from continued pressure acting on a debilitated constitution by lying in bed, and not from any external violence or injury; had she recovered from the ulcers (which was not very likely, on account of the shock her debilitated system had sustained) there was sufficient disease in the head and chest, which would shortly have terminated her existence.

Charles Wilden (a brother of the deceased,) was then asked by the Coroner, whether he wished to put any questions to Mr. May, when he arose from his chair and said:—"I do not wish to ask Mr. May nor any surgeon here, any questions, for it is of no use; we have not justice done us; I believe some of the gentry have given Mr. May, perhaps ten, perhaps twenty pounds, to come here and swear; they have all been shaked in a bag together;" or in words to the same effect.

The Coroner then ordered him to leave the room, and his brother and sister left with him, although the Coroner offered to allow them to remain if they wished.

Unity Williams was then re-called, and the evidence of William Hodson read over to her; she declared solemnly, that his statements were false, and said, "I never struck Mary Wilden in my life." William Hodson was then called in and confronted with Unity Williams; in answer to the Coroner's questions, he said, "I have not quarrelled much with Mr. Moody: I was close to the window and could see the beds inside, without raising myself on my toes; I did not do so when I saw Unity Williams beat Mary Wilden."

Unity Williams then asked Hodson how it was he did not knock at the window and call out to her, if he saw her beating Mary Wilden? To this no reply was given. The man Hodson then stated, that some time since, he and another man were talking about funerals, and the other asked him if he had ever helped to carry any body to the church; "I said, no, I had not, but I said there was one person I could like to carry there, but I did not mention any name; I meant Mr. Moody, and I wished to carry him out to bury; I was afterwards locked up for that; I cannot say why I wished to do so, but I know I said so; I have no explanation to make."

The Coroner in summing up the evidence, gave it as his decided opinion, that the Medical men had satisfactorily accounted for the death of the pauper, and in alluding to the evidence of William Hodson, stated that he thought it altogether incredible, and the man himself was unworthy of credit.

The Jury then gave their verdict to the effect, that Mary Wilden died from natural causes and not from any violence whatever.

Now my Lord Duke, the circumstances above stated, are certainly dreadful! The Jury's verdict, however, was (strange as it may seem) an acquittal of *Wilful Murder*. I do not mean against the poor Irish Savage, but against the Concoctors, the Enforcers, and the Commenders of the Infernal New Poor Law—who are the real murderers. I understand that some of the *Gentlemen* of the Jury, finding that their verdict has astonished the good people of this part of Yorkshire, are individually trying, as the only bamboozleing excuse for their strange verdict, to spread the report that some of the family (not the poor afflicted female victim) were not over *religious*.

"And what," your Grace may say, "do *you* defend *irreligion*?" No, my Lord Duke, I do *not!* but I do denounce the uncalled-for taking away of the character (by lies) of any human being for the purpose of depriving him of his just rights to add to our own ill-deserved abundance. Yet these were the means first resorted to by the wicked Concoctors of the Infernal New Poor Law Bill, in order to induce the gulled people to submit to have it crammed down their throats. They sent lying Commissioners round the country ro vilify the characters of the *Poor* whom they meant to tob of the rights which they had regularly purchased, during

hundreds of years, at the price which had been fixed upon them by the Legislature. Now my Lord Duke, as this is the grand crime alleged against some of the family of the poor afflicted victim, I ask *what is Religion?* I do not apply to *your Grace* for information on the subject, for it is what I have long known. I therefore resort to the written *Word* of God. *That* informs me, that "Pure Religion, and undefiled before God and the Father is this:—To visit the Fatherless and Widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world." Now, my Lord Duke, it is required that a man should come into court with clean hands. We shall enquire, by and bye, what kind of hands these gentlemen have, themselves, in that respect, possessed. For the present, however, we will just see what right these gentlemen had to expect that the family of the poor victim should have been all religious.

We will refer to the said good old Book before alluded to. We shall find it there asked—"How shall they call on *Him* in whom they have not believed? How shall they believe on *Him* of whom they have not heard? and how shall they *hear* without a PREACHER?" If, then, the family of this poor afflicted creature had not had an opportunity afforded them of hearing a true Preacher of religious truths, they were the more to be pitied—and not blamed for not being religious.

I do not know how the four churches of Laughton, St. John's, Dinnington, and Auston, are *now* supplied, nor do I personally know the present Ministers; but as far back as I have known those several parishes intimately (which is now between thirty and forty years), the four churches were supplied by the same individual. This was the time when the family and poor Mary *should* have been led to have been religious. I only knew two of those Reverend Divines. The first I knew during many years. All that ever I heard of *his* being *famous* for, was *that* of being the best *Quoit player* in all the neighbouring parishes. (I once gained great applause for beating his only competitor, though I scarcely ever played a game at Quoits before). He was, however, in some respects, though not in time of beginning service, very *punctual* at feast dinners, he never kept the company waiting for their Chaplain. He, moreover, was so expert with his knife and fork, that he never was the last in clearing his plate, though in the beginning the work before him would have alarmed many a timid mortal.

Of the Reverend Divine who succeeded him, I comparatively knew but little. The *Squire* knows more of *him*, as well as of *his successor*, than I do. I know, however, that he was such a Tee-total man that he would never suffer a spirit bottle to *stand* before him, with any of the insipient poison in it, for long together. I could relate many of the proceedings of this *preacher*, to shew that poor Mary was not very likely to become over religious during *his* ministration. The Squire, I daresay, can furnish many more anecdotes on the subject than I can, though I am in possesion of a good many. Perhaps the Squire may recollect his dancing among the servants on *his* lawn, on the evening of the Sabbath day, till the *little* afternoon potions which he had taken began to work so potently that they completely overpowered him, and that he was then sent home to Laughton, in a cart, and shot up at his own door like the old decaying trunk of a *Crabtree*. From those men, then, poor Mary was not very likely to learn much *religion*.

Well now, my Lord Duke, you must excuse me, for (as our Guardians at Sheffield say) "going through the whole *Kit*." If the *poor* are to be *tested*, so should be the *rich*.

After the Clergy, I must proceed to your Grace. I must confess that I have but slight grounds to proceed upon—only your Grace will recollect that we shall all be judged according to that which we *have*, and not according to that we have *not*. Now every one must admit that your Grace has enjoyed many times more opportunities of acquiring religious instruction than the family of poor, fit-afflicted Mary ever had. Well, then, has your Grace profited in proportion? I appeal to your Grace! I myself know but little how that may be. I certainly am informed that when your Grace is in the country you do almost daily "*visit* (but without seeing them) *the fatherless and the widows in their affliction*," at the Worksop Bastile; but for what purpose, my Lord Duke? From the present case, it seems to visit their poverty with the rod of imprisonment, and their sufferings with the scourges of inhumanity, producing putrifying sores and death (did your Grace know that there was such a being as poor Mary in the house?) Now, my Lord Duke, is this religion? How far your Grace may walk *humbly* before God, and keep yourself unspotted from the world, I presume not to know. As to the *religion* of your Grace's fellow-guardians, my Lord Duke, I know but very little, except that *they* did *not* visit poor Mary in her afflictions; but I think

that poor John Berry's case, as well as this, will serve to shew that they neither much fear God nor regard man.

As to the portion of religion which the officers and servants of the Union Workhouse possess, I conceive the Inquest will pretty fully disclose. I have, my Lord Duke, known something of three successive *Squires* of Dinnington. *Religion*, however, never appeared to me to be the predominant trait in the characters which most distinguished two of them. Of the present one I know but little. Judging from his conduct respecting the Inquest, he seems to possess *prudence*.

Now, what is the Coroner? Is he a *religious* character? Alas! I fear not. I almost shrink from stating what I think he is; but I must confess that I think him but little better than a brute. The first time that I ever heard much of him was on an Inquest held on the body of a poor old man at Stannington, when the afflicted son dared, like poor Mary's brother, to obtrude in a way that did not please the Coroner. The poor man's name was *Nutt*—for this obtrusion the feeling Coroner exercised such a humourous tact at punning on the name of *Nutt* as kept all the *gentlemen* of the Jury *laughing* during the remainder of the *solemn* investigation. This gave me some insight into the character of this Judicial Investigator. Other instances, before the occurrences at the Inquest at Dinnington, have occurred to confirm my first impressions of his character. Even *since* that Inquest, I see from the public newspapers, that his prominent character (not as a religious man) has been fully brought out at the late York Assizes. Like a savage hyæna, he seems, without provocation, to have seized upon a poor little Cur, as if he would have worried him, had he not been, as was stated, *throttled* off. He was then publicly declared by his opponent or victim to be considered by the whole town as a *blackguard*. In confirmation of these charges, a Jury (of which *he* had not the controul) condemned him to pay fifty pounds. The Coroner then, I presume, is not a more religious character than the rest!

What, then, were the Medical Evidences? I have within the few last years been compelled to look pretty closely into the characters of medical men, and have paid rather dearly for my peeping. As a *class* of liberally educated men, I consider them the least *religious* of, perhaps, all others. I have no reason to believe that the three *elect of the Coroner* (for they were all appointed by him) on the Inquest, were

among the most religious. I suspect the contrary. (Two of them were the servants of the accursed Union)—the third (appointed by the Coroner) was a young man, probably looking up to him for some such situation. Now medical men, who accept of appointments under Unions, must be something like either angels or devils They must either be induced to do all the good that the situation requires at an enormous loss of time and expense to themselves, or they must sacrifice the *poor* to their own poor gain. These three young men were not likely to be of the former class—while their conduct certainly shewed them, in my opinion, to be of the latter. I fear, then, that they were not qualified to cast the first stone at poor Mary for being *irreligious!*

Well, then, what were the twelve men of the Jury? Not knowing who they all were, I can only judge them by their *verdict.* I, however, remember one of the class, many years ago, who was then Overseer of the Poor; he was not quite a *Squire*, but he was what they then termed a *Statesman.* The parish had a poor distracted woman chargeable to them; they had no workhouse; she had no friends to take her at *their price.* He put her then into a tumble-down hut on the edge of Aston Common; and at one of the feast dinners, as a diverting occurrence, he related that as he came over the common she was wandering *stark naked* on the road. I don't think that such men are likely either to judge for themselves, or to offend a *Duke.* If they were interested in the pocket, they would visit at all hours. For instance, if they had a cow in labour, a crippled horse, or some sheep which had got the maggots, they would carefully attend to their necessities; but I do apprehend that half the poor in the parish might lie, and die, of putrifying sores in the Union Workhouse hospital, without any of them ever thinking about them. We have *laws* to protect *brute beasts* from such horrible cruelty, but it seems none to protect the most pitiable of all human creatures. Is *religion* then really in the *hearts*, or only on the *tongues*, of these gentlemen of the jury, who seek to justify their extraordinary verdict by the accusation of the want of it, by some of the family of a poor afflicted female who seems scarcely to have had from any human source the opportunity of learning anything but wickedness.

The Governor seems to have possessed as much of *religion* as of either humanity, or attention to his duty.* The Irish

* The reports circulated of the misconduct of this man are so bad as

female savage seems to have been rather his superior, though it is said that he treats her as his equal. Indeed, my Lord Duke, these gentry do seem to be rather unworthy companions of your Grace, and others of the dignified members of the proud aristocracy of this most mighty empire! Greediness, like poverty, seems to bring great men acquainted with strange bed-fellows.

Now, my Lord Duke, having gone through the *propria persona* of the tragical drama, I will remark on the occurrences of the several scenes and acts.

Before doing this, however, I will just mention that I understand that your Grace, the Guardians, and Jury, object that her brother, who has lately purchased a little cottage, ought to have kept her without her being chargeable to the Union. Now, my Lord Duke, this honest industrious man has never been any thing but a *labouring man*. The great complaint of you great men was, that poor men would not abstain from the sin of matrimony, and lay up something for old age to keep themselves from the parish. Now this man *has* done this; and your Grace's complaint now is, that he will not deprive himself of this independence to keep a sister, whom he is not by law, called upon to maintain, but whom your Grace *is* bound to contribute to maintain, and so leave himself without anything to keep him out of the Bastile in his old age. Anything, my Lord Duke, for a quiet life, or to save the pocket! The poor, my Lord Duke, had a lien on your Grace's estate before it was yours, and you had no right to deprive them of it. I see that your Grace is, by way of obtaining "*a quiet life*," trying to gull the simpletons with small plots of land at a cheap rent. Your Grace reminds me of the liberal highwaymen who robbed the travellers of their *whole*, and took credit to themselves for giving them a few shillings to get them a lodging for the night. The object of our little great men seems now to be to break down the old independent spirit of all Englishmen, and divide them into two classes, tyrants and slaves. How came your Grace by your estate? What does it consist of? I will tell your Grace. It consists of superabundant labour, accumulated through many preceding ages. *There is no other wealth.* The labourer only received a small portion of the

to be incredible; but I think that the character given by Mr. Potter to Mr. Badger may be justly applied to the Governor.

product of his labour, and the remainder has been often employed, as in this case, to exalt tyrant kings, who knew not Joseph, to oppress and enslave his brethren; keeping the straw in their own hands, and yet requiring the full tale of bricks. If ever there were fools in this world the aristocracy are such at this time. They seem neither to fear Ged nor regard man. I suspect, indeed, that their days are numbered.

Well, now for the *verdict*, into which the Jury, in this case of poor Mary Wilden, seem to have been completely *Badgered* by the Coroner, whom, Mr. Potter asserts, all the Rotherhamites consider as a *blackguard*. They found that she died *solely* from *Natural Causes, and not from any ill treatment*. Now, my Lord Duke, does your Grace, does the Coroner, does any of the three medical men, or any one of the Jury, know what they mean by dying from *Natural Causes?* Natural causes produce health and strength; they are *unnatural* causes that produce wounds and diseases.

Before the introduction of the infernal New Poor Law, Mary had a small allowance from the parish; she lived with her brother and sister, and was comparatively well and happy. At much more expense, this Law of Hell took her (afflicted as she was) to *prison*. Her sister declares that she had then no wounds upon her besides a small one, from her leg having formerly been fractured and ill set. Now look at this, one of the most to be pitied of human beings—torn without remorse, *for no crime whatever*, from those friends whose aid was essential to her comfort, and as it seems to her existence, and thrown at more expense without a friend within her reach, among some of the most unfeeling, brutal, inhuman beings, that this wicked world contains. What were the consequences of this savage treatment? What might *naturally* be expected—*unnatural* wounds, disease, and death!

How trifling would have been the sufferings, comparatively speaking, to poor Mary, had the Governor and his coadjutor, the Irish woman, taken her at first and *Burked her!* Would the crime have been greater? God only knows. It would, at any rate, have extended to a much fewer number of individuals. The Governor would in that case have known whether she was dead or not, which he did not do when her sister wanted to see her. What death can be conceived so miserable as that of a comparatively *young* woman, so afflicted with frequent fits, deprived of every comfort and every necessary support, imprisoned among profligate strangers, never see-

ing during her sickness a spiritual guide and comforter, and but *twice* a medical man, who never once dressed her numerous horrible fatal sores! But this was not all: we have her own testimony (when she dared to speak) and the testimony of others, as well as that of the wounds themselves, to prove the horrible, violent, ill treatment to which she had been subjected. From comparative health and soundness she was thus reduced by treatment, which the greatest villain that ever existed in the world would not be exposed to in this country, till her frame was gradually debilitated, and her body was become full of putrifying sores, and but little less than *a mass of putrid composition*, and thus left to die by one savage in the hands of another savage, to hasten it by violent meaas.

However the *Badgering* Coroner may have sought to discredit the testimony of William Hodson, I do not, on inquiry, find that he is any scoffer at religion, or joker on death, nor have I ever heard of its being declared of *him*, that "the whole town thought *him* a *blackguard*;"* but the Coroner seems *(from some cause or other)* disposed to place more confidence in the veracity of *Mrs. Unity Williams.*

This gentleman, the Coroner, after having sworn this *Lady*—who, with the Governor, were suspected of being the cause of the premature death of the poor victim—on the New Testament—to declare—on pain of forfeiting the favour of God—to speak the truth, the WHOLE truth, and nothing but the truth—proceeded to tell her that *she must say nothing to criminate herself.* I have long known, and declared, the impiousness of oaths. Perjury is declared to be, and is punished as, a flagrant crime. Yet here, a being, entrusted with judicial authority, publicly calls upon an ignorant, vicious being, to perjure herself. She has *sworn* to tell the *whole truth*—and he, after leading her to do so, tells her *not* to do so. Every person present was, I am convinced, assured, that she could not speak a word of the truth, *without criminating herself.* Was not Mr. Moodie in the same predicament? When are these damning, and damnable, *oaths* (of no use to either Christians, or Infidels,) to be abolished? Here the Coroner told her that *she must perjure herself.* He swore her to tell the *whole truth*—and then told her *not* to tell the whole truth.

* This man declares that such was his treatment in the Workhouse, that he would rather die breaking stones than return to it.

Mind, now, Mr. Moodie *swears* that Mary Wilden had only been *eight or ten days* confined from indisposition, while from all the other evidence, it is clear that she had been fifteen or sixteen *weeks* confined. It will be recollected that, when her sister called to see her, Mr. MOODIE conceived that she was *dead!* and this man is the Governor of the whole establishment. How did the sister find this poor ill-afflicted, female victim of the Devil's New Poor Law—who was torn from her friends—well, and nearly sound—about three years before—to be immured—without a charge of criminality, into the most dreadful imprisonment that is now known in this or any other country? She found her, after the most excruciating sufferings from neglect, want, and horrible cruelty, in a fireless room—the snow falling—the window open—intolerable stench—and covered with putrifying sores—horrible filth—and *with "lice in all her quarters"*—unvisited by either bodily or spiritual physicians, though almost at the point of death.

One of those beings (who for a little filthy lucre, *engage* to care for the poor) had, during fifteen weeks, only seen her *twice*, and never either given her anything, or dressed her wounds—asserted, that the most dreadful wound—(that on the foot)—had been caused by her sitting with it *too near the FIRE*. The day on which her sister called upon the poor victim, the 18th of February, was one of the most severe days of this winter—the snow was falling fast—and yet there was *no fire whatever* in the room—though (as will be hereafter shewn) from the horrible stench, the window was set open. Let it be remarked too—that this room—called the *hospital*—was on the ground floor—and the window open to the public. This in a new Union Bastile! The Governor Moodie *swears* that she had plenty of wine and gin—while his favourite Irish lady swears that she had not only *wine and gin* (capital medicines *she* no doubt thought,) but also that she had as much of beef-tea, mutton broth, pudding, and *anything else she fancied*—as ever Mrs. Moodie could *afford* her. If the Badgering Coroner had instructed them, I hardly can doubt but that the Jury's verdict would have been, that she died from having taken too much of these powerful stimulants.

The Surgeon, Hase, does not *know* (how should he, he only saw her *face* twice) that she received any wound but from falling. Does he *know* that she received any one wound *from so doing*, (he never perceived her black eye.) No! he

does not! Her brother and sister say that she never was at all violent in her fits—while so totally helpless was she in bed, that the Irish brute was forced to call assistance, sometimes two, to turn her from one side to the other. The beds, I apprehend, in the workhouse (could she have fallen out) are not like those at Welbeck, requiring a ladder to get upon, and hazarding a broken head or neck to descend from,) a person might roll twenty times from a workhouse bed without hurt, and be quite as comfortable on the floor, as in the bed. In fact, the wounds, in their then state, were clearly from debility—from ill usage, filth, and from almost total neglect. (This *I* call *murder*.)

The report of the Coroner, whom Mr. Potter calls "the Blackguard of Rotherham," as respects the turning out of poor Mary Wilden's brother from the investigation, who, (though a poor working man of Sheffield) had had three or four times to go to Dinnington—does not seem to be the *whole* truth. He told the brother, Charles Wilden, to ask the medical men any question that he chose—he did desire the Coroner to put one question to them; but instead of doing so, he (the Coroner) replied to it himself. It was then that, from outraged feelings,* the brother of the poor afflicted female victim—who had been just dead and cut to pieces in her sister's home—spoke warmly (but nothing which, I believe, was not in substance true.) For this the Coroner called upon the *Constable* to turn him out—who, preparing so to do, the half-distracted brother, with *his* brother and sister, properly left the room. The Badgering Gentleman, with Mr. Athorpe and the Rev. Mr. Downes, followed to apologise. Such are some of the proceedings of this reputed blackguard on a solemn Inquest. An Inquest, the undisputed facts of which are more horrible than any of which, I think, I have ever heard during my long life.

It was on the snowy winter's morning on which her sister had been to see Mary Wilden—when the Irish woman wanted to keep her from seeing her, till she had first made her more fit to be seen in her horrible state, in her fireless room, and horrible sufferings, and when the poor dying victim had electrified them all by her exclamation of astonish-

* To enhance these feelings, the Badgering, reputed blackguard, had obtained from this brother of poor Mary's, the notes which he had prepared to assist his memory in giving evidence—on a promise to let him have them before his examination; but he would neither let him have them then, nor since.

ment and delight at once more hearing, in this world, the sound of the voice of one human being who cared for her. It was, I say, on this very morning, that William Hodson, on passing near the open window of the hospital heard the cry of *murder*, and on looking in, saw the Irish brute not only strike the poor, dying, helpless creature with her fists, but abusing her in a still more disgusting manner. This, too, was on the morning on which the Governor had stated to the sister that *he believed she was dead.*

As to the evidence given on the second investigation, by the Coroner-appointed three young Union Surgeons, and three poor women brought by the Governor out of prison to serve his purpose, I think that I have rather stronger grounds for discrediting, than the Coroner had for discrediting that of William Hodson. To me it seems clear, as it did to the brother of the poor victim, that it was given under undue influence. It is so clearly opposed to the established facts, so discordant, so contradictory, and incredible, that I may safely leave them to speak for themselves, only that, before I have done, I shall have a parting word for the Doctors. It is clear to me that these witnesses stood in the same degree of awe to the Coroner and the Governor, as some of the Guardians have acknowledged that the whole of them do to your Grace, when present at their meetings—not daring to say that black is black, if your Grace says to the contrary.

It has long since been declared in a book of some authority with me, that "the wicked are entrapped in the works of their own hands." Here is an instance of its truth:—When the dreadful facts of this case were brought so unexpectedly to me by the brother of the poor victim, I requested him to call at the *Iris Office*, to speak to the Editor, who not only, with me, advised an inquest, but, at the same time, promised to attend and report it. The inquest, however, being fixed on a *Monday*, the day on which the *Iris* is prepared for the press, he could not possibly be spared to attend it at such a distance. This I did not know till afterwards. I learned then that a particular friend of the Editors had kindly consented to attend for him. That friend of his I only knew by sight. His being a medical man, had nothing to do in the selection—the object was only to obtain a correct report. He is, however, a respectable medical man. He was so good as to attend the inquest. When all the witnesses, intended to be examined, had been heard—the

Coroner said that a post-mortem examination should take place, and, that therefore, the inquest must be adjourned. The two medical men asked if it might not *then* take place; the Coroner stated he must appoint another Surgeon, as *three* were required. To his great surprise, they then informed him that there was another medical man present, and that the friend of the Editor was he. The inquest, however, ultimately was adjourned till Thursday. Having indirectly learned that he, Mr. Carstairs, had himself carefully examined the body previous to the inquest, I took the liberty to request of him to favour me with any information in writing on the subject, which would neither be improper nor unpleasant to him to give. In consequence, I received the following important document, with his leave to publish it:—

Division-street, Sheffield, March 26th, 1839.

Sir,—In compliance with your request, I herewith send you the general appearances presented by the body of Mary Wilden, as far as I can remember them, and from notes taken at the time. I have only stated what I saw without hazarding a single opinion of my own.

I am, Sir, yours respectfully,
THOMAS CARSTAIRS.

To Samuel Roberts, Esq.
Park Grange.

GENERAL APPEARANCE AFTER DEATH OF THE BODY OF MARY WILDEN, AT DINNINGTON.

The body was very much emaciated, conveying the idea that the person must have been, at least, 70 years of age, and was very much disfigured by blue and black marks; the hair on the head was cut very short, and the scalp was spotted in several places, with small dark spots; one of the eyes was surrounded with a black mark, which extended over the nose, down on the cheek, and up on the forehead to a considerable distance; the arms were bruised in many places, particularly under the elbows, the fingers were contracted, and drawn in towards the hand; the legs from the knees to the ancles were a complete mass of black and blue substance, and considerably swelled; the right was twisted about the middle from a previous fracture being badly set; on the top of the left foot, there was a very large ulcer, extending from about half an inch in front of the ancle joint to the roots of the toes and occupying nearly the whole breadth of the foot; it was so deep as to have exposed the tendons on the

front of the foot, having completely destroyed the skin and other integuments, and the edges of the ulcer were round and inverted, shewing that there had been no tendency to heal, or that proper remedies had not been applied; there were ulcers over both hip joints, that on the right side being the most extensive; it was about three inches long, by two inches broad, and had proceeded so deep, as to shew the muscular fibres of the muscles covering the joint, among which some matter was seen; the skin round the edges to the distance of half an inch seemed to have been dead some time previous to death, and had the person lived under the same treatment, I have no doubt would have extended; on the other hip the ulcer was about two inches by one in breadth in the broadest part; at the lower part of the back bone, over the loins, was a large black slough extending across the whole breadth of that part of the back, varying in breadth at different parts: that immediately over the back bone being about three inches, while at the extremities it was only one; I do not see how all these sores could have been produced by laying in bed, even during the extreme time stated in the evidence, viz., sixteen weeks, had proper cleanliness and treatment been pursued by the attendants; had the patient been confined to one position, for instance, the back, a slough might have been produced in a debilitated constitution: but in the case of Mary Wilden, three sides were ulcerated, which shews either that proper treatment was not applied to the parts on which she was not laying at the time, or that some other cause had produced the sores than "the confinement to bed;" I never remember to have seen a case where so extensive an ulcer was produced as that on the right hip, by a confinement of sixteen weeks to bed without ever being removed: whereas it appears from the evidence, that Mary Wilden was able to get out of bed, and tumble on the floors, and even move herself in bed from one side to the other; there was a large black slough on the left knee about the size of half-a-crown, and the other knee was very much discoloured, but no open sores; on the right foot were several smaller ulcers, varying in size from the point of an ordinary sized quill, to that of the little finger; the body was also much discoloured across the shoulders, but this may have taken place from its position after death; on the whole, I cannot see how confinement to bed could have produced the sores, and kept them open, had proper treatment been applied: while the existence of so many and so extensive ulcers, must have tended greatly to weaken a constitution, impaired in all probability by previous chronic disease.

Now, my Lord Duke, is not this Malthusian—this Marcusian system of yours, a most damnable system? Is it not a system most decidedly, and violently, opposed *to the whole law of GOD?* Is it not spreading the most horrible de-

bility of body and soul through all ranks of society? Is it not propagating corruption, and unfeeling inhumanity, with a renouncement of every honourable, independent, manly spirit, and introducing an abject, selfish, subjection to profligate, tyrannical wickedness in high places, among the middle ranks throughout the nation? Are our rulers so blinded by that infernal being—to whose service they seem to have resigned themselves, body and soul, for promises which never will be kept—as not to perceive that they are rushing headlong into that trap which he has, in this diabolical bill, laid for their ruin both in this world and in the next?

Look at the horrible profligacy pervading the palace—surrounding the throne—disgracing the legislature—sullying the mitre—contaminating the officers of the state, from the highest to the lowest, and spreading like a noisome and destructive plague, throughout the whole mass of tradesmen. All seem hastening headlong on the wide road to the pit of destruction, totally unmindful of the immense number of the indigent poor, or hardworking labourers, whom they may in their mad career maim or destroy. All these truths I have over and over declared, but the reply has been, "prove it—let the poor complain." In a thousand instances of misery and death, caused by this Law of Hell, the probability is, that no one could be *proved*, the mouths of almost all men being stopped. Among the intense sufferings of ten thousand imprisoned poor, the voice of no one, it is probable, would reach the ears of their *great* oppressors. *They* therefore cry continually, "*the bill works well*," or as does your Grace, "*all that is a matter of opinion.*"

Now, my Lord Duke, it has so happened that, without my seeking for them (may I say, my Lord Duke, *providentially?*) two of the most horrible cases of oppression and death-dealing cruelty have lately come to my knowledge, perpetrated by your Grace's crack Union at Worksop, that taking all circumstances into consideration—the history of inhumanity throughout the world can furnish. In one case it was inflicted on an *in*—in the other on an *out* patient.—With both these your Grace, though almost the sole director, and, almost, a constant visitor, was, I believe, totally unacquainted. Now then, is it not probable that there may be very many others in *that* Union of the same description, of which your Grace knows nothing? How many thousands of such then, may there be in all the less attended-to Unions in the kingdom? But it is quite enough to know that the

infernal system *admits* of such acts of villainy being perpetrated. Your Grace may, perhaps, burn this—as you did my letter to your Guardians, in favour of poor John Berry—but burning the truth, often enables it to enlighten the world more extensively. When Lord Stanhope, on the 19th March, presented poor old John Berry's petition to the House of Lords—the Lords were so horrified at the statement, that several declared that it *could not* be true. (Declarations, my Lord Duke, are more easily made in that house, than refuted out of it.) In consequence, Lord Wharncliffe wrote to the Guardians of the Ecclesall Union, to know if it were correct. They sent him documents to shew that it *was* correct, and, also, that (from the investigation of their medical man) the poor old man's case was more lamentable than he had represented it to be. I trust that this will be explained to the house.

Now as to poor Mary Wilden's case, I wish not, my Lord Duke, to hang either great Governor Moodie, good Unity Williams, or any others of the party concerned in what I consider as being (if not murder) the most horrible death that I almost ever heard of. Does your Grace consider, after reading this exposition, that your Grace is fit to preside over an institution of so extensive a nature; in which crimes so horrible have been discovered by a being so distant as I am,—of which your Grace—though on the spot—knew nothing? Does your Grace think that Governor Moodie—who did not know that poor Mary had been ill above eight days—and who thought that she was dead when her sister called to see her—is fit for *his* situation, if such a situation is fit for *any one*. Does your Grace think that your Grace's fellow *Guardians* of the *Poor*—who acknowledge that they are only your Grace's *Slaves*—are fit to have the lives of so many of their fellow-creatures committed to them? Does your Grace think that the Irish Savage, Unity Williams, is fit to be intrusted with the care of a public hospital—(open to the observation of all passers-by)—in which such poor afflicted, unaccused, dying female prisoners, as poor Mary Wilden, are left to perish? Does your Grace think that a medical man, such as Mr. Hase, who only saw the dying patient *twice* during fifteen weeks illness; who never administered any medicines; who never once dressed any one of her numerous, dreadful, destructive wounds, is fit to have the lives of the crimeless inmates of an accursed Union committed to him? Does your Grace think that a Clergyman

who, *undertaking* to provide for the spiritual instruction and comfort of all the wretched beings subjected, for no crime but poverty, to the will of tyrants,* and never once comforted, or even saw, the poor afflicted dying Mary in the hospital—was fit for *his* situation? Yet for the conduct of all these, I conceive, my Lord Duke, that your Grace will be hereafter responsible.

Does your Grace think that the Coroner—after what I have stated respecting his character and conduct—is a proper person to occupy so ancient, so important, so honourable, and so life-preserving a station? Does your Grace think that the three young medical men—situated as they were, selected as they were—were proper persons to be empowered to direct the decision of a Jury, in a case of life and death? Does your Grace think that the Jury (judging from their verdict) were men to whose fiat the lives of their fellow-creatures ought to be entrusted?† My Lord Duke! by this Act of Hell, not only are all the villains in the kingdom afforded an opportunity of coming forth and gaining profitable places, but all the weak and wavering are tempted to become as bad as the rest; while the few, who are proof against the price of fratricide, are injured and persecuted to the utmost of the power of the God-defying country destroyers. I will just instance the Editors of public newspapers—nine-twentieths of which have probably sold themselves for filthy lucre's-sake, to promote, to the utmost of their power, this work of the Devil and all his agents: for which they are daily or weekly clearing by advertisements of Unions, &c.

* It was during his being in the house that the Irish savage took the opportunity of exercising her tyrannical power on her dying victim.

† These Gentlemen of the Jury had seen the body of poor Mary Wilden, as described by Mr. Carstairs, covered with most horrible putrid extensive deep festering wounds—the head covered with black spots, a black eye, the legs a complete mass of black and blue substance, ulcers on the hips so deep as to expose the muscles—with black marks over almost all the body. This they had seen, and heard her own account stated, of dreadful inflictions, neglect, and horrid cruelty, which she had endured. The miserable state in which her sister found her—covered with lice in all parts—with the evidence of William Hodson. All this they had seen and heard, and yet, they not only brought in a verdict that she died from natural causes—without any reference to *ill-usage*—but they even went on to state, gratuitously, that there was no reason to suppose that ill-usage had hastened her death. Now, is there a disinterested, uninfluenced man—possessed of common sense—in the world—knowing all these things, that can think that the Gentlemen of the Jury were at all like him.

&c. from, perhaps, five to fifty pounds—of which the IRIS and other papers, which dare, conscientiously, to stem the torrent of corruption, and do their best to rescue their poor fellow-creatures from the fangs of oppression, are left to receive *their* remuneration here from an approving conscience, and from a trust in a higher and better approval hereafter?

My Lord Duke—what is all this for? The Country *was* quiet, and satisfied; but the Bill is *working the ruin of the Country!* If the people would have been quiet, and left the Aristocracy and great Landowners, in peaceable possession of their undeserved (too great) superabundance, they would, if they had had the brains of geese, have been not only satisfied but thankful; but our present rulers are as imbecile and ignorant, as they are greedy, inhuman, and wicked. They can *pull down* all that is good, but they can build nothing of the kind up. Tyrants are always fools; or, perhaps, I ought to say, fools possessed of power are always Tyrants. The People, *i.e.*, the *Working People* of this country, to whom you, my Lord Duke, and all the Aristocracy, owe the possession and retention of their estates, are not easily roused to retaliation. Treat them with moderate kindness, and shew them that you are inclined to render them *any* service, and they are not disposed to be either dissatisfied or turbulent. But, my Lord Duke, your existence as a privileged order, is on sufferance. *United*—the power of the people will be irresistible. The mad, impolitic, inhuman, degrading, enslaving, destructive, demoralizing, dechristianizing measures, which you are now enacting and enforcing, are calculated (by arousing suspicion, engrafting hatred, and establishing a demand of justice, and a thirst for revenge,) to further that union of interests, and unanimity of operations, which innumerable other circumstances have long been advancing. *The New Poor Law, and the Aristocracy cannot long exist together!* *

SAMUEL ROBERTS.

Park Grange, April 5, 1839.

POSTSCRIPT.

"*The Poor DARE not complain.* No! it is as much *as their very existence is worth*, (humanly speaking,) to utter a

* What, my Lord Duke, would your Grace's *honest Father* have said to such villainous measures?

word of complaint, either themselves or through their friends. When the more humane Guardians of Ecclesall Bierlow, wrote to the Worksop Union to request that they would allow poor old John Berry and his wife something more than *two* shillings per week to live upon, the answer of the worthy clerk of his Grace the Duke of Portland, (I suppose by his Grace's order,) was, that if the Union heard any more upon the subject, *the two shillings* would be *wholly* withdrawn, i. e., if the poor old man (aged 91) and his aged wife, could not be satisfied with a shilling each, they must have their old bones shaken in a cart full *twenty miles*, and be put *asunder*, into *prison*, without a spiritual comforter, under the tender mercies of the Christian minister, Mr. Moodie, and his beloved tender hearted coadjutor, Mrs. (or Miss) Unity Williams—who might say, if this did not suit them, they must stay where they were, and die, and be —— to them.

Now, what is *our Crack Union* (which needs to care nothing for the Devil's agents) doing? Why, I apprehend, that we have hundreds of similar cases in which the poor, perishing creatures—aged men and aged women—*dare* not open their mouths to those who are starving them to death (they will perish before they will go *into prison*) half their former pittance is taken from them—if they dared to open their mouths —the answer would be, "You shall have no more *out* relief—*come in*"—they of course refuse, and die, so the blessed Union saves the money. *I* know of these cases, though the Guardians hear nothing of them—they, therefore, cry out—"*the Bill works well.*" *God*, however, knows something of them; and the Guardians *will* hereafter know something of them!

I saw it *triumphantly* stated lately, in one of our weekly publications, which abounds with Union advertisements, that though the town had of late years most unprecedentally *increased* in popuiation, the Rates for the relief of the poor had, in about the same degree, *decreased*. I have heard that the Schoolmaster is abroad—I am *sure* that the DEVIL is abroad. The poor, I am certain, ten years ago, were *not superabundantly* relieved. In proportion as population increases, the poor always increase in the greatest ratio. How then can this fact be accounted for? By no possible way (the expense of managing the concern being greatly *increased*) but by absolutely robbing of the worthy, famishing poor, of that pittance to which the laws of God and man entitled them, and which nature requires to preserve life, by the very beings

whom they had, perhaps, through life, been contributing to raise to that station which now enables them to be themselves oppressors of the poor. Some of them, however, I hear, have been solicitors themselves for relief. This, I am sure, is *not* the *work of God!* The *Church* and the *Old Poor Law* (if God please) can stand without such men, as from apprenticed Overseers, become Journeymen Guardians, and then, perhaps, Master Sub-Commisioners.

Why are we not here at Sheffield, as independent, as unenslaved, as much masters of the disposal of our own property, as the inhabitants of the comparatively unimportant little town of BARNSLEY? There the *Three Tyrant Kings*—even with the aid of the great Lord Wharncliffe—have not dared to curtail, or dared to deprive them of, one iota of that Liberty of Englishmen, to obtain and secure which, millions of specie, and of human lives, have, in former ages, been sacrificed! I will tell you why. *Our* working men have been fools, for being misled by knaves. But this is hard upon our perishing poor. Every Guardian of the Poor of the Sheffield Union is a traitor to his God and to his country. He is a Steward of the State voluntarily engaged to enforce her laws, while he breaks them and sets them at defiance every day, at the same time he is breaking the laws of God—he is, therefore, an *unfaithful* Steward. But villany (obey or disobey) pervades the whole system. Our Guardians here want to do what the Scriptures of Truth declare to be impossible—to serve at the same time, and, by the same means—God and the Devil. Oh! it is horrible to hear men talking and preaching about *believing* in Christ—and knowing them to be daily, and hourly, setting both his precepts, and example, at defiance! Such men are far worse than the Priests and Levites of former times, for they can see THIEVES in the very act of robbing, maiming, and murdering their poor neighbours, and pass them by unregarded.

REMARKS ON THE FOREGOING INQUEST.

I should not have presumed to have obtruded the following remarks on the public, had they not obtained the sanction and revision of high (perhaps, in this case, the highest) medical revision and approval:—Is it to be wondered at, that poor Mary Wilden should have a *debilitated constitution?* Locked up, it seems, in

her room at a certain hour at night, and kept a close prisoner there until Mrs. Unity Williams, the favourite nurse of Governor Moodie, had had her morning's "bit o' bacca," (subject as she was to fits, of very frequent and severe occurrence,) without the least assistance being afforded to keep her from falling out of bed, or in paying a proper regard to her personal cleanliness? Mr. Henry Hase, who boasts of having been surgeon to the Worksop Union ever since it was formed in 1836, seems an excellent colleague for the WORTHY Governor. He seems to understand that he is appointed surgeon to the Union, in order to smooth matters down a little, and to see that the paupers do not die from overfeeding.—According to his own account he has been *very* attentive to the duties of his post. He repeatedly visited poor Mary Wilden, in the Bastile, and frequently gave her wine with his own hands, (wonderous condescension!) *which immediately afterwards she denied having taken*—this Mr. Hase "thinks was constitutional." What was constitutional? Taking wine from one she had so much reason to dread? or from not being aware that she had taken it? or was it *constitutional* in her to like *Workhouse wine?* or did the rigid prohibition enforced in the Worksop Workhouse, against the most trifling article which can be called a *luxury*, being given to the inmates, beget a *constitutional* deceit, necessarily resorted to on all occasions for their own safety?

This same Workhouse surgeon, in speaking of Mary Wilden's wounds says, "the wounds on her hips were deep ulcers arising from pressure by lying in bed and from *a debilitated constitution;* they were certainly not the result of any external violence; the wounds would have been of a very different nature and character; such wounds, *I think*, could not be produced by a blow or other violence." Indeed! Mr. Hase—I have but little skill, it is true, in the healing art, but I have always thought that the effects of a direct blow, causing a bruise, and of a bruise caused by pressure, which takes a longer time to act, were the same. Could your Grace distinguish between a black eye got by a quarrel, and one caused by a continued pressure over the same part? *You* perhaps could not, nor any other man living, barring the surgeon, you have selected for your own work*shop*, *house*, I mean. This man, further states "it was impossible to get them (the wounds) to heal on account of her DEBILITATED CONSTITUTION, and constant pressure from lying in bed, and *the involuntary discharge of the fæces and the urine, which would contribute to increase the ulcerations and prevent their* HEALING.' This *is* speaking the truth, at last, Mr. Hase. You ought, I conceive, to know that a person whose joints have become ulcerated by confinement to bed, may have their sores dressed in such a manner, that nothing whatever can touch them, except the dressings which the surgeon applies. Suppose your Grace, or any member of your Grace's family, or any one in whom you had an interest, was afflicted with

fits as Mary Wilden was, would your Grace consider Mr. Hase a proper person to honour with your confidence, if he did not take some measures to prevent your fœces and urine soaking and irritating sores, brought on by confinement to one position? Or would you consider *so kind a nurse* as Unity Williams, a proper sick-bed attendant, if she was so remiss as to permit such a disgusting condition to endure for even one hour? No, all the purple and fine linen at Welbeck might be defiled, but you must be comfortable. Mr. Hase might boast of his Workhouse experience, but *that* would not alleviate your sufferings, and Unity Williams might come to you recommended by your faithful workman, Governor Moodie, but you would insist upon something more than *his* word for her capacity. Mary Wilden, my Lord Duke, had feelings as keen as you have—she knew when her sores smarted, and as Providence had striken her with so serious a malady, it became her medical attendant and nurse to use double vigilance. This of itself, even with nourishing food and proper treatment otherwise, would soon cause a DEBILITATED CONSTITUTION, even in the most robust.

Mr. Wilkinson, Harthill, surgeon, I believe, to one of the divisions of the Worksop Union, was called in to see her when she arrived at Dinnington, and found her in a most pitiable condition; but it was part of his cue to discover that none of the ulcers or bruises had been produced by blows. The ingenuity of this gentleman is almost on a par with the profound skill of his colleague. Really the Worksop Union have got some clever surgeons, for which, I hope, the paupers are sufficiently grateful. A question which would have puzzled some of the wisest heads and longest faces in the profession, is disposed of by him as readily as he would administer a dose of jalap. Hear this, ye bookworms, who waste your brains in endeavouring to discover the cause of diseases, and learn wisdom from a Poor Law Doctor—"THE ULCER ON THE FOOT WAS OCCASIONED BY SITTING BEFORE THE FIRE." It is a subject of remark, and sometimes of regret, that medical men oftener make fools of themselves in a witness box than any other class of men. What a figure Mr. W. must have cut in an open court, subjected to the fire of a rigid cross-examination, for hazarding such a statement. It does not appear that Mary Wilden had been permitted to approach the fire for some time previous to her being removed from the Workhouse. On the contrary, she was confined to her own room. Mr. Wilkinson did not see her in the Bastile, and had never witnessed the *kind* attentions of Unity Williams, on whom it would be a libel to suppose that she was so remiss as to allow a patient to sit so near the fire as to burn her foot. Besides, I have an impression that your Grace paid so much attention to the comforts of the inmates while the building was erecting, as to give orders that all the wards should be heated with steam or hot air when additional warmth was necessary, in

order that there might be no danger from fires. We are not informed how long the ulcer had been on the foot, but according to Mr. Hase, he had discovered it some time before she was taken away from his care, so that by what process of proof or reasoning Mr. Wilkinson found out the sore to be of igneous origin, seems a mystery. Perhaps, like the story of the surgeon's apprentice, who informed his master that a patient had eaten a horse, because he had seen a saddle and bridle under the bed, there was some coke or coals on the edges of the wound, which explained all.—His conclusion is nearly as good as Mr. Badger's summing up—"I should say her death was from exhaustion from visceral disease, and also, from sloughing ulcers, ALL *arising from natural causes*, and not from violence." This is the climax. Assumption and presumption, without knowledge, investigation, or discrimination.

Mr. Badger, however, was not satisfied with "THE DEBILITATED CONSTITUTION, and *natural causes*" of Messrs. Hase and Wilkinson, so Mr. Henry May was ordered to attend and enlighten them still further. He starts with observing "a slight mark of a bluish black colour, on the left side of the nose, appearing to be the result of a *blow* or *fall*, but not of recent occurrence." It must have been a *tickler* when received, to preserve its black colour so long. I have not had so much experience of black eyes and bloody noses as perhaps Potter has lately had, but I never knew one last a fortnight without changing colour, becoming first yellow, and then greenish, but Mary Wilden's DEBILITATED CONSTITUTION, perhaps, was not sufficient to overcome the shock, and it turned from black to blue, and then from blue to black, until Mr. May, who, I believe, has not had a very long experience in his profession, however considerable it may have formerly been in "*black eyes*," could not decide on the colour. His description of the ulcers is rather more limited than one I have obtained from a *neutral* medical man who was present, but it is sufficient to shew that they were considerable. His conclusion is also a brilliant specimen of what may be learned by imitation. "The wounds on the body of the deceased, in my judgment, arose from continued pressure acting on a DEBILITATED CONSTITUTION by lying in bed, *and not from any external violence or injury;* had she recovered from the ulcers, (which was not very likely (*not at all likely, and never meant*) on account of the shock her DEBILITATED SYSTEM had sustained) there was sufficient disease in her head and chest which would shortly have terminated her existence." This is virtually saying that the ulcers were the cause of her death; the ulcers, Mr. May, Mr. Hase, and Mr. Wilkinson tell us were caused by lying in bed, and aggravated by the filthy state in which she was permitted to remain,—*the death of Mary Wilden is, therefore, clearly traced by one continued chain of evidence, and that evidence trying to the utmost to remove all blame from*

the people who had charge of her in the workhouse, to the very parties they strive so hard to exonerate.

There is no surer proof of guilt than when the prisoner's own friends criminate him by unwilling, *exparte* evidence, and never was this proof more triumphantly established, than the Badgering Coroner has unwittingly done by this Inquest. The different links in the chain, when separated from the rubbish of DEBILITATED CONSTITUTION, &c. by which they are surrounded, are infinitely more decisive than all the surgeons in the county of York, and they are, I conceive, by no means a scanty body, could have done.

ADDRESS TO THE PEOPLE.

THOUGH the foregoing case of Mary Wilden may be only one, among, perhaps, thousands of others equally atrocious which are never heard of by the public, it is probably the most striking one that has hitherto been so providentially brought to light, and so clearly, and strongly corroborated. It embraces, and makes manifest, almost every villainous feature of the accursed Bill. It displays the God-defying daring, the inhuman ferocity, and the death-dealing disposition, and exertions, of its great, and rich, Concoctors and Enforcers. It shews the mercenary, sycophantic, toad-eating abjectness of all the wretched beings from the Three Kings —(not of Brentford)—of Somerset House to the worse than Jack Ketch of Worksop Union Bastile. Between these two are included, the *Noble* and Ignoble Guardians—the Sub-Commissioners—the Mrs. Unity Williams—the accommodating under Nurses—the Reverend Chaplains—the attentive Medical Men—the tender-hearted, punctual Relieving Officers—the impartial, gentlemanly Coroner—the discerning, unbiassed Jury—with the almost universal inhuman, diabolical corruption which the infernal Bill is, by the agency of its abettors, spreading through all ranks of society—from the prince to the pauper—from the palace to the cottage—from the holy mitred Dignitary to the poorest Curate—from the head of the Dissenting interest to the tip of its tail—from the Woolsack to the Beadle—from the Leadenhall tea brokers to the very lowest grade of tradesmen and shopkeepers—from the Howicks, the Humes, the Harveys, the Parkers, the Wards of St. Stephen's, to the *Lacklands* paid by the Triumvirate to traverse the country, like the destroying Angel, to propagate a destructive disease.

Britons! if you believe in God and fear him—if you honour your Queen—if you love your country—if you value your liberty—if you regard equal laws—if you abhor tyranny and delight in justice—if you esteem purity in the female character, and execrate deceptive villainy in its betrayers—if you regard your aged parents and love your children—if you hate the Devil and all his works*—join hand, heart, voice, and unwearied exertions to rid your degraded afflicted country of *this Hell-concocted New Poor Law Bill.* Do your duty to your God and to your country, and you will find that HE who is for us, is far *mightier* than all they who are against us.

* Look at the villainous proposal of wretched Tyrants, to bind in chains of slavery, by a General Police force, the whole country.

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